

# Stuck in an Elevator

## Message 5: Compassion

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**INTRO:** (Elf video) -

***Stuck in an Elevator?*** - “Elevators force us to be close to people that we may have never chosen to be around otherwise.”

***The connection*** - The church, like an elevator, forces us to be around people we may have never chosen to be around!!

- ***NEWS FLASH:*** Sometimes Christians don't get along!!! Living with the family and community of God can be difficult at times!!
- If you are part of the family of God, you are ‘*STUCK in an Elevator*’

**Series Big Idea:** God wants His People to Enjoy Healthy Biblical Community.

**Col. 3:12-13** “<sup>12</sup>Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. <sup>13</sup>Bear with each other (endure) and *forgive* whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. <sup>14</sup> And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”

**So far we've talked about Love, Forgiveness, Patience, Encouragement...**

**Tonight's Story:** **Luke 5:15-26**

<sup>15</sup> Yet the news about him spread all the more, so that crowds of people came to hear him and to be healed of their sicknesses. <sup>16</sup> But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.

- **Setting** – early in Jesus' ministry, in Capernaum, his fame spreading, drawing crowds

<sup>17</sup> One day as he was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law, who had come from every village of Galilee and from Judea and Jerusalem, were sitting there.

- **Audience** – Pharisees & TLs, presumably with others in the crowd, many whom probably walked a great distance to hear him teach – Galilee, Judea, Jerusalem (80+ miles)
  - P & TLs were probably there to 'inspect' Jesus' teaching...
  - Many others were probably there as skeptics, doubters...
- Jesus is in the middle of teaching when he gets interrupted by some attention-seekers
  - A model of true compassion

**And the power of the Lord was present for him to heal the sick.**

- Is this something Luke knew while there, or was it an insight the HS gave him when writing his gospel?? What would that look like?? Sense the presence of the HS?
  - Power – dunamis – miracle, ability, abundance
  - Heal – to make whole, restore

<sup>18</sup> Some men came carrying a paralytic on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus.

- 4 men come carrying a paralytic on a mat/pallet – one man per corner
  - We have no idea how far they came, or whether they even knew the sick man
  - Imagine how tiring it is to carry a man several miles on a flimsy mat!!
- **Compassion:** a gut-level feeling of pity towards someone or a situation
  - A feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, *accompanied* by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering.

<sup>19</sup> When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus.

- They meet with initial failure, as the crowds are too great to press through, especially carrying a crippled man on a bed!!
    - After failure, they don't quit. They proceed to climb the roof!!
    - What does that look like??? Ladder??
    - Mark says they 'dug' through the roof – which would have been flat w/ tiles or mud thatch
      - **NOTE:** When acting in Compassion you sometimes get dirt under your nails!!
    - They also would have needed rope w/ which to lower the man on the bed
      - Imagine the work involved in this act of compassion!!
      - Roof was not sound-proof!
- (ILL)* At this point, imagine the silence that was filling the room. Did Jesus stop teaching? Was he too watching the scene unfold? What were onlookers saying? What were they thinking?
- I'm sure this wasn't like the scene in MI where Tom Cruise falls gracefully to a perfect stop either! Instead, they dropped him right in front of Jesus!!

<sup>20</sup> When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

<sup>21</sup> The Pharisees and the teachers of the law began thinking to themselves, "Who is this fellow who speaks blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

- Now they appear to have hit a snag – Jesus goes controversial on them!!
  - This is not just a "We don't see eye to eye" situation.
  - This kind of thing doesn't end with "Let's just agree to disagree"!!!
  - Their plan causes serious controversy, one that may end with flying stones!!

<sup>22</sup> Jesus knew what they were thinking and asked, "Why are you thinking these things in your hearts?"

- Jesus knew their thoughts – as they all lacked the courage to accuse him of blasphemy
  - Can we hide anything from God??

<sup>23</sup> Which is easier: to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?

- Only God can forgive sin, thus it is blasphemy to assume God's privilege
- **How many know Jesus is never on Defense???** Jesus takes the offensive!! It's a pre-emptive strike!! He actually reasons with them about which would be the harder thing to say/accomplish. Tension continues to build...
- So things aren't going well for this party of me
  - **(ILL)** Men on the roof – thinking, what did we get ourselves into??
  - **(ILL)** Paralytic – Think for a second about life as a paralytic in those days. The never-ending begging, the hopelessness. Then waiting, hoping that someone might get him to see Jesus.
    - Now, he is thinking, what on earth am I in the middle of?? These moments probably felt like an eternity laying there, wondering if the stones will hit him too.

**BUT, then came the 5 words that broke the tension...**

<sup>24</sup> But that you may know... (imagine the relief these words brought! – Jesus doesn't leave them 'hanging' any longer)

- Where in your life are you waiting for a "But that you may know..."?

<sup>24</sup> But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...." He said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home."

- Son of Man – two very common words, put together mean Messiah
- **Authority** – *ecousia* – privilege, freedom, mastery, liberty, right, Jurisdiction
  - Jesus makes clear that this is His Jurisdiction – the whole earth is His!
- And before He heals the man, he let's them know that there is another dimension to the healing – that it is the very validation of His Messiahship!!
  - That "sin forgiving" is indeed His Jurisdiction!!

<sup>25</sup> Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God.

- Compassion paid off!! The 4 men may get off the roof now without fearing an angry mob

<sup>26</sup> Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today."

- All people were amazed at what just happened.
  - **Did Jesus ever finish what he was teaching on??**

**Message Big Idea:** The Health of a Community grows with the Compassion of its People.

## **Conclusion:**

### **Lessons we learn from this story about Compassion:**

1. Compassion goes the extra mile.
2. Compassion is sometimes met with disappointment (set-backs) – must press thru!
3. Compassion is sometimes dirty & uncomfortable.
4. Compassion sometimes risks embarrassment, humiliation, or even failure.
5. One act of Compassion can make all the difference in someone's life.
6. True Compassion is evidenced by action.

**Imagine** - what a community of faith could look like if everyone allowed the HS to move them w/ compassion towards their brothers/sister in Christ!!

- Love (one another)
- Forgive (one another)
- Be Patient w/ (one another)
- Encourage (one another)
- Be Compassionate towards (one another)